

## The Grapevine Great Hinton

Time seems to rush by so fast these days that no sooner is Christmas over than we are into the new year. So it's a good time to pause for thought! Why do we celebrate Christmas? Because we look back and remember the moment in history when Jesus was born. Why do we celebrate the new year? Because we look forward to all its new opportunities. Jesus came to give hope where there is none. Let's make a new year's resolution to give hope to someone in some way and make a difference to our community and the world we live in.

Richard Clarke Editor 870635

### Great Hinton Parish Council

#### Steeple Ashton School

You may have read in the Wiltshire Times of the decision to close Steeple Ashton School. A consultation process is now underway, though both Great Hinton and Bulkington Parishes were not included in the formal process. Fortunately we have been able to obtain a copy of the consultation document and to submit our views before the closing date.

It has been proposed that children from Steeple Ashton should transfer to either Bratton or Semington. We had hoped that the children would be transferred to Keevil, which would have helped to secure the future of the school that serves our children. This option appears to have been rejected on the basis of incorrect information about capacity at Keevil. Without the increase in the catchment area of Keevil School it remains at long-term risk of closure. I believe that this proposal is yet another example of how little value our local authorities, and indeed Government, place on sustainable rural communities.

If, as has been proposed, Steeple Ashton children transfer to Semington then the children will go to George Ward on the north side of Melksham at age 11, and if they go to Bratton then they will be in the catchment of Matravers School in Trowbridge. This would mean that children in the two villages of the same parish, Steeple Ashton and Great Hinton, would go to different secondary schools (the catchment school for Great Hinton is Clarendon).

In our response to the consultation we have therefore proposed that the option of transferring to Keevil is the most logical and should be reconsidered.

#### Fore Street Farm

The estate executors of Kath Berrett have recently submitted an application to build a new house, with stable and garage, on the garden land between the Memorial Hall and Fore Street Farmhouse. In view of the prominence of the site your Parish Council have given particular care to our consideration of the proposals.



Fore Street Farmhouse pre-war

The application seems to have been drawn incorrectly as it excludes a large triangle of land on the Hall boundary and the frontage to the road. We have drawn attention to this error as it has a significant impact on the siting of the proposed house.

The site does however lie within the village policy limits area, indeed it is one of only four locations in the village where new building would accord with planning policies. Consequently our comments to the District Council have centred on the impact of the new house on the existing listed building, the layout of the development and the design quality.

Our primary concern is that as submitted the application has sited the new house very close to the existing and that the amount of land to be retained by the old house would be insufficient to make repair and renovation a viable option. Given some worrying comments by the applicants' architect on the condition of Fore Street Farm we are very concerned that the application may be the first step in seeking the demolition of Fore Street Farmhouse.

Using the policy arguments available to us we have urged the District Council to reject the application in its present form. We have instead pressed the District Council to seek a single application covering both new building and the refurbishment of the existing house as we believe that only such a comprehensive approach will result in the much needed regeneration of the house, garden and farm outbuildings.

**Chris Munday Chairman**  
Tel: 870912

#### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Saturday 13 December**  
Children's Christmas Workshop

**Thursday 11 December**  
Christmas Lunch

**\*\* Tuesday 16 December \*\***  
**at 7.00 in the Memorial Hall**  
Christmas Carol Singing with  
Mince pies and mulled wine  
**\*\* All welcome \*\***

**Saturday 10 January (Evening)**  
Hangover Party

**Saturday 6 March (Evening)**  
Pub Olympics

## LUNCH CLUB

For one reason or another numbers have dwindled since the summer break. However, the meals and the company are still enjoyed by those who continue to gather on the second Thursday of each month. We miss May Newman and Charlie & Daphne West who are unable to join us for health reasons - we wish them well again. We have welcomed Carol Clarke both as a member and an additional cook.

**We hope you will join us for our Christmas lunch Thursday 11th December at 12.15 for 12.30pm in the village hall. All are welcome whether or not you have joined us previously.**

The new kitchen certainly makes life easier. I should like to say a personal thank you to those who offered their skills and time in removing and disposing of the old units and appliances and fitting the new ones. A big thank also to those who did all the necessary electrical and plumbing work involved and the final redecorating. It was a great team effort and all hall users will benefit from the results.

## HARVEST CELEBRATIONS

On 4th October, twenty-four villagers met in the hall for a very enjoyable 'Harvest Supper'. Thanks go to those who helped me with the cooking:- Anne, Carol, Diane and Doris and to Sylvia & Stan for providing and preparing the runner beans. We made a profit of £85 which, as last year, was sent to a water aid project in Africa.

The following afternoon there was a record attendance at the 'Harvest Service' and auction. Without the vicar, who by then had retired, our praise and thanksgiving was led by Richard, ably assisted by the children who took an active part. We were very grateful to Celia and Richard Young from Ashton Common, who once again accompanied our singing on keyboard and flute.

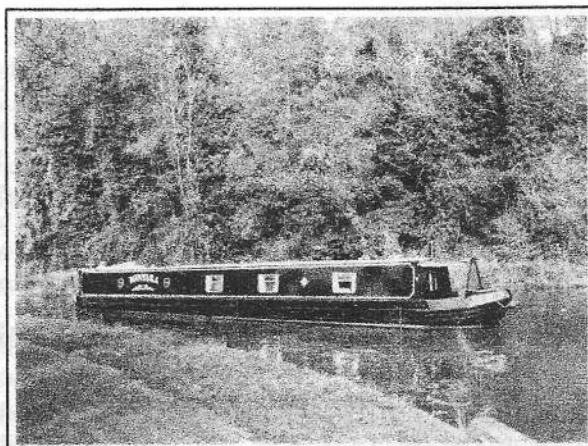
The auction raised £85, which together with the canned goods was sent to Trowbridge Action on Homelessness.

**Audrey Plummer**

## CANALSIDE CHIT CHAT

You will have read recently of two narrowboat fires on the canal. Tragically the second one caused the death of its owner-occupier. What you may not have read about is of a series of 'break ins' involving four boats, one of which was ours. (Our boat is called MINTAKA by the way.) So life on the waterways is not always the peaceful idyll of popular belief. Fortunately, apart from a broken bolt, we suffered no damage as a result of the break-in and nothing was taken. The intruder appeared only to be interested in food and booze.

Judy and I decided, because of the considerable delay in the delivery of MINTAKA, that we would take up a winter mooring locally and set off on our voyage in April 2004. Ahead of us lies approximately 2700 miles of inter-



connected canals and rivers. This is an adventure we have planned for a long time now and is the only reason we left Hinton. The financial advantages of selling the bungalow and buying a more lettable town property enabled us to more securely fund our new life. Our ambition is, one day, to return to the village, but in the

meantime whilst we are physically separated by a few miles, we endeavour to maintain our links with the village and continue to enjoy the benefits and friendships we have developed over the past few years.

Many people in Hinton have been aboard MINTAKA but there may be others who are curious/interested in having a viewing or even a short trip. Please let us know and we would be delighted to play host. Our telephone number is 01225 781337.

**COLIN & JUDY**

## Silver Celebrations at Safari Dinner

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October saw 25 people changing venues around the village for our 'Silver Anniversary' (as in 25 events not 25 years). Tables were dressed in silver and some participants wore silver - Kevin and Sandra went mad and spray-dyed their hair in silver!! (luckily it washed out easily the next day). There was a free raffle, with prizes purchased from excess funds, in which all participants on the evening and at previous events were given tickets pro rata the number of events they had attended. Audrey won some very good whisky; Rebecca the Champagne; Gwen a plant; Judy a box of Shortbread; John Parsons a bottle of wine; Valerie and Pat both won boxes of chocolates; and Sandra won the Sherry.

There was still enough surplus in the funds to give a donation of £50 towards the refurbished kitchen in the village hall. The intention is to give another £50 after the next couple of Safari Dinners.

The next event will probably be towards the end of April, after Easter so look out for the date in the next issue of the Grapevine.

**Sandra**

## LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

County have published their Annual Progress Report. The Westbury Bypass scheme is described in a separate booklet. The cost of the bypass is now estimated at £17.7m. County hope to get a planning application approved in early 2004, and for the road to be open in 2006, subject to funding from the government.

Work continues on the freight strategy. Signs are being reviewed to make sure lorries are encouraged to use the 'box' of main roads - M4, A303, A34 & A350.

**Trevor Carbin,  
District Councillor  
228 Church St, Hilperton  
BA14 7RG. (01225)  
713066 fax 713137  
[trevorcarbin@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:trevorcarbin@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
Surgery Saturday mornings  
10.30 to 12 at above address**



## BADMINTON NOTES

We don't just thrash the living daylight out of dead chickens as was evidenced on Saturday evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov. Our skills are much broader which was demonstrated at the Badminton Group skittle evening held in the Village Hall. The first event was a nine-a-side match between the ladies and men, which the men were able to win and this was followed by a game of killer, eventually won by Neil. Diane catered for the gastronomic needs of the members and their partners whilst Ken was the principle organiser. The event was paid for from funds.

Speaking of funds you may be interested to know that in October 2002, May 2003 and September 2003, the Badminton Group made contributions to the Village Hall funds of £190 in total. Successful though we are, we are still "press ganging" new recruits and we are pleased to welcome our latest "victim" - Debbie from 'Blue Haze'. Well that's all for now I must go and polish my shuttlecocks.

Colin Ramsay

## Children's Workshop and Hallowe'en Party

Twelve village children from 3 to 9 years old had a wonderfully creative time at the workshop on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October. Audrey had organised some super things for them to make in time for the party and was assisted by Diane, Doris and Anne. We had great fun cutting out witches, ghosts and pumpkins for the wall decorations. Jam jars were covered in brightly coloured cellophane, given string handles and a night-light in readiness for trick and treating. Sand buckets got covered in crepe paper to hold all the 'treats' and masks were made to frighten everybody! Biscuits in the shape of witches, owls and pumpkins were decorated with icing tubes and we all got in a fine old mess but the children went home very happy!!

The following Friday, the Eve of All Hallows, they all returned plus a couple of visiting grandchildren and were all in wonderful fancy dress - some really scary! They tucked in to

food decorated for the occasion and then played games from pass-the-parcel to apple bobbing and trying to eat dangling sticky doughnuts! I personally had to hold 'Dracula's' fangs so that he could bob for apples!! It was all enormous fun and with Emma's help we got them organised in groups to go 'trick and treating' - luckily it was a fine night, no traffic about and their jam jar lanterns were very effective. Soon their buckets were full of sweets, chocolates and oranges and we'd like to thank everyone for their support. Next year we plan to call at more of your homes, so be warned!!

Please note Mums & Dads that there will be a Christmas children's Workshop in the hall on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> December when we'll be getting in the festive mood. All children between 3 and 10 very welcome - it's guaranteed they will have a happy constructive time. More details later.

Anne Truman

## ACTION FOR EPILEPSY

I would like you say a big thank-you to everyone who supported my recent Tea Party in the village hall when the magnificent sum of £500 was raised for this very worthwhile charity. From the friends who gave donations or raffle prizes or made cakes and to those of you who came on the day - especially Diane, Audrey and Doris who all worked so hard - many, many thanks. I have had a lovely letter from Epilepsy Action who were thrilled with the cheque we sent. Geoff, our son, has benefited from the support of this charity, especially when he did a sponsored walk up Ben Nevis a few years ago and met so many new friends - so thanks on his behalf too.

Anne Truman

## LADIES CLUB

Our Autumn programme began with a Beetle Drive very ably led by Rosie Keith whilst I was sunning myself in France. I am told it was enjoyed by all, which means we will do it again some time, though I can't promise to keep the ladies in order as well as Rosie did.

Our group can be very proud of the fact that they surpassed themselves

in October by beating all past records in filling more than 70 shoe-boxes for the Operation Christmas Child project. These boxes are delivered to children suffering through war, poverty, natural disaster and disease in over fourteen countries in Eastern Europe and beyond. Hilary McFall, local organiser, has expressed her gratitude for our contribution.

Thank you Eddie for organising our November event. A very interesting evening when Herbie Randall showed slides and talked about the birds around our village. This was a meeting opened to all villagers who packed the Hall.

**16<sup>th</sup> December is Carol Singing Night**, a Tuesday instead of the usual Monday, when we enjoy some Christmas rhymes, carols, mince pies and mulled wine. Do come, and bring the children to ring the bells and join in this celebration. "Away in a Manger" sung by the young ones always brings a tear to the eye!

The following night, the ladies will be in festive mood once more when we have our annual Christmas meal in The Linnet.

May I take this opportunity of thanking the ladies for all their help and loyalty to the club (especially during my recent absence with Shingles) and to extend a warm welcome to anyone new in the village - or who has lived here for years and would like to give us a try - and to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Carol Clarke 870635

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Suspicious cars have been seen in the village and reported to the Police who have said that nothing is known against the owners. BUT there is now a record of these cars being in the village and I would urge everybody to report to me or the Police any suspicious person or car seen in the village.

There is still a problem with bogus callers preying on elderly people and I would urge everybody to phone a neighbour or the Police if they are unsure of a person who is seeking entry to their home.

David Harnott

## GREAT HINTON MEMORIAL HALL TRUST

The most important news is that we have just finished our project to upgrade the kitchen in the Hall. This means that we now have a fully-fitted kitchen with a full work surface, a double sink, a good hob and oven and plenty of storage space. We have also, as part of this project, ordered a set of lightweight folding tables to replace our existing heavy wooden tables. These will arrive shortly. This means that our Hall will have a good quality kitchen suitable for catering, and that we will also have new tables and chairs more suited to our needs and more appropriate to a new Hall.

Even though the Trust Committee was responsible for securing funding through a grant from the Millennium Commission, the Community Committee has managed the installation of the new kitchen. All the Committee have been involved but it is important to mention a few people whose contribution has been essential: Mike Truman and David Harnott have been responsible for planning and monitoring the project throughout, with Mike undertaking all the design work required. Steve Baker put in an eleven hour day to do a superb job of fitting all of the kitchen furniture and fittings. Joe Norris, ably assisted by Diane Norris, undertook all of the electrical work including the difficult installation of a new extractor fan. Finally, Doris and Derek Saville donated to the project an excellent hob and oven which has already been used very successfully at a few events. Our thanks to all those people who continue to show such a commitment to the Hall as an important part of our local community.

The Hall continues to be used very regularly. Remember it is possible to book the Hall for private functions. To make a booking, contact David Harnott on 871196.

## COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

The Trust Committee report has already described all the work that has been going on at the Hall. This new kitchen installation has

taken up quite a bit of the Committee's time over the last few months, so it is good to see it successfully finished and in regular use.

Since the last Grapevine, we have held another of our regular Skittles Evenings and a Harvest Supper. This was timed for the evening before the Sunday Harvest Service which is held every year in the Hall. Therefore the Hall was beautifully decorated with flowers and produce of all kinds.

A programme of activities for the children in the village is now being led by Audrey Plummer, and there was a successful Children's Workshop on 25 November with a Halloween theme, followed by a Halloween Party on 31 October. You may have seen the result of the Workshop as the children went around the village "trick or treating" as part of their party on 31 October. I understand that only one of the children was sick! The fifth of our popular Quiz nights was held on 29 November in the Hall. This was organised by Rosie and Alistair Keith, and Carolyn and Neil Haynes and was another successful evening. If you are fed up with Saturday evening television and you want a bit of fun, good company, plenty of food and drink and a bit of a challenge, this is the place to be! It was again a closely fought event with all five teams scoring well. In the end, "Golly's Gang" came out on top and won the grand prize of a bottle of plonk each. Well done to everyone who came!

We are starting to plan next year's activities, so please check the "Dates for Your Diary" on the front page and keep an eye on the board outside the Village Hall for the announcement of events.

*A survey by the 'Baywatch' campaign found one in five supermarket disabled bays was occupied by a non-disabled motorist. Safeway shoppers are the worst offenders.*

## OLD POTS

Trowbridge Record Office is hosting an exhibition about a project to conserve a collection of Wiltshire's Bronze Age pottery. Modern conservation techniques are compared with those used by Victorian archaeologists. The £200,000 project was mostly financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

## Hall bookings

Now that we have a growing band of young people in the Village don't forget Mum and Dad that the Hall is an ideal place for a party and at £10 it's got to be a bargain.

Now that the Judo sessions have stopped as the instructor has been re-assigned to another area, Friday nights are free - is there anyone out there interested in setting up a chess or bridge club on that evening?

David Harnott 871196

## B.Y.O. Evenings

As always, meet in the "Linnet" from 8.30pm on Tuesday evenings for a chin-wag. Buy Your Own drinks and meet a nice mix of people from the Village. Hope to see you there.

Mike T.

## Art Group

We meet in the Village Hall on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm. for two hours. Feel free to join us. We are looking for new people to come along and enjoy a light hearted social evening which sometimes produces a work of art!! - and of course a glass of wine at half time!!

Mike T.

## I.T. Classes

The classes on Monday mornings and afternoons are proving to be very successful and enjoyable - a few students have even taken exams! The new term starts on January 5th and there are several places available, no previous knowledge of computers necessary or you could advance any previous knowledge. The fees are just £1 per hour and the first three sessions are free (6 hours) to new students. We have all been delighted to get our Christmas card addresses on disc for future years and print this years labels. For more information phone me.

Anne Truman 870607



## A mind-stretching experience

by Xanthe Smith

What a spectacular country South Africa is!! My hockey tour to South Africa was an opportunity of a lifetime and such an eye-opening experience seeing the different cultures and lifestyles.

We flew into Cape Town on the 5<sup>th</sup> August to the gloom of the South African winter!! It was here that we participated in an international hockey tournament, a trip to Cape Point and Boulders Beach, a township tour and where we experienced the amazing views from Table Mountain.

For the first 9 days we packed in the hockey, playing 11 matches leaving us physically exhausted! The tournament consisted of high quality opposition, as there were Uruguayan Internationals and SA Provincial players. Even though our hockey was ever improving we lost 5 matches, winning only 2. However we won all our friendly matches against local SA schools, boosting our confidence and our all round hockey.

The Township tour was very moving because it enabled me to see the dramatic effects of the apartheid. In District Six the coloured members of the community were driven out of their homes being forced to live in shanty areas such as Langer, even being separated from their wives when walking down the street. However if they tried to stand up for themselves against this awful discrimination they were imprisoned on Robin Island and punished!

You can all probably associate Nelson Mandela being imprisoned here, but there were many more people whose lives were also ruined by the prison, and the real life stories told by the guides of their



experiences were emotionally devastating. Although there are now still many people begging by the roadside, everyone is accepted more willingly within the community in Cape Town.

Experiencing the African Culture during the evenings was one of the most engaging events on tour. On Monday evening after enjoying an African Platter consisting of Ostrich, Kudu and Springbok we entertained the restaurant with some African dancing which was great fun but extremely exhausting!! On our last night in Cape Town we joined a drum circle, which was amusing as everyone's interpretation of the rhythm was so different and some people had no rhythm at all!

As we moved along the coast on the Garden tour I was sad to leave the buzzing atmosphere of Cape Town, however the positive side was the weather began improving!

While in Stellenbosch, George and Oudtshoorn, we went on Safari in a 4x4 seeing Giraffes,



Wilderbeast, Rhino, Bontebok, Kudu and Baboons, stroked Cheetahs at a wildlife ranch and went swimming in the Atlantic which was surprisingly warm! Although the sights were stunning, exercise was not forgotten as we went abseiling, canoeing, quad

biking and entered some Beach Olympics.

South Africa opened my eyes to the World and I would like to thank the Village Hall committee for their kind donation from the Pentathlon Fund towards this trip, which was an experience of a lifetime.

## MOBILE LIBRARY

The Library van comes to The Linnet car park alternate Fridays at 11.10 - 11.25am. We are so lucky to have this amenity for village use. At the present time there are only two regular users of the service in this village. We all pay our fair share of Council Tax and the Library service is one of the few

amenities available to us in rural areas, so it seems a shame that it is not used more fully. If we don't use it we shall lose it - so come along all you readers, ADULTS AND CHILDREN, help us to keep it.

Audrey Plummer

## Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

I should like to extend my thanks to all in Great Hinton who so generously helped fill my box again this year. The amount raised was £125.34 with a further £16.56 from the box in The Linnett. I apologise to the few houses I missed, but will try and do better next year.

Bill Barker

## 100 Club

David Harnott 871196

Some new names have appeared on the winners' list lately - if you have not been lucky this year perhaps you will win the BIG ONE £50 this Christmas

	£15	£12	£10	£8	£5
August	22 Paul Winterburn	60 Shirley Brookes	61 Paul Haynes	78 Mary Clipson	99 Joyce Newman
September	92 Pat Putt	13 Neil Harnott	51 Mrs Ghey	29 Elena Newman	103 Judy Ramsey
October	103 Judy Ramsey	51 Mrs Ghey	60 Shirley Brookes	33 Chris Munday	105 Mike Symington
November	73 John Parsons	5 Mike Truman	92 Pat Putt	17 Jeff Newman	121 Mrs C.Jones

# CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS PAST & PRESENT



It's probably true that we all remember the Christmas times of our childhood better than last year's event and then we wish that time had stood still. For some it has, as today's family Christmas traditions have been founded on the memory – sometimes a little hazy and adapted for today's circumstances – of those cherished childhood experiences of wonder and mystery.

Colin no longer gets up at 4 a.m. to open his presents, but he makes sure the alarm is set for 7 a.m. and after a quick fortifying cup of tea he can delay no longer and tears the paper off the first present. His father always cooked the Christmas lunch, never appearing at any other time of the year in the kitchen. Judy is grateful now that Colin has not followed this particular tradition. There used to be silver joeys in the Christmas pud – for the same purchasing power today there would be more cupro-nickel than pudding. Judy's mother still puts on the mantelpiece the Father Christmas which every year is refilled with sweets as it was when she was a child.

Neil and Carolyn will not be budged from their traditional lunch of roast turkey and all the trimmings with crackers. Further excitement is provided by a strategically placed bunch of mistletoe. Kissing under the mistletoe is an English custom dating back to at least the earliest 17<sup>th</sup> century. The correct procedure now rarely observed, except in the Haynes household, is that as the young man kisses a girl under the mistletoe he should pluck a berry, and that when the last berry is gone there should be no more kissing. Maybe it is because of the proliferation of mistletoe in the orchards of northern France that the Frenchman is more romantic than the Englishman. Mistletoe is rigorously excluded from church decorations as it is associated with the human sacrifices of the Druids.

Audrey's memories of Christmas go back to her grandparents' farm in Norfolk. After breakfast the family opened their presents, and a goose was always roasted for lunch. Then it was a trip to the beach at Yarmouth where skirts and trousers were hitched up for a quick paddle in the North Sea.



Carol and Richard always made sure that their two boys had a stocking to try and keep them in their bedroom until 6.30 if they were lucky. There was always a tangerine put in first, then followed prit stick, sellotape, thank you notelets, puzzle book, small lego toy. As they got older some contents changed to include stamps to write home from university, pot scourers, soap, disposable razors, miniature whiskey bottle. Now happily married with their own homes the challenge is greater to find something appropriate, but there will always be a tangerine to shake out last of all. And there is always the expectation that the homemade coconut fudge will have set to the consistency of a firm snowball!

"When our two children were little we lived in a village in North Devon about half a mile from a fabulous beach. After being woken very early on Christmas morning, helping them open their bulging stockings (always a small piece of coal in the toe for good luck!) we'd wrap up and head for the beach in our 1934 Austin 7! It would be deserted, ours would be the first footprints on the sand, the waves crashing over the rocks and we'd collect drift wood for the fire. Great fun and we'd get back to the cottage to the lovely smell of the large chicken roasting - more of treat then in the early 1960s!! This was our family Christmas tradition until sadly we had to leave wonderful North Devon - we still return most years to visit old haunts." Anne and Mike



Helen turns back the clock to her days as a trainee nurse at the Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester in the 1960's. On Christmas Eve all the nurses who could be spared from the wards and those off duty gathered to sing carols at the bottom of the staircase in the foyer with their cloaks turned inside out to reveal the warm red material and lanterns of jam jars with nightlights. Their voices would soar upwards to echo off the ceiling at the top of the stairwell. Then they would process round the wards where lights would be dimmed as they sung her favourite carol Silent Night and in the children's ward Away in a Manager. On

Christmas morning several tramps would be invited in for a bath, shave and haircut and to share in the Christmas meal. Every patient was given a stocking and a little present from the ward sister. At lunch time the steaming turkey was wheeled into the ward on a trolley and the Consultant would wield not his scalpel but the carving knife to cut it with deft and confident strokes.

